Fact Sheet

Locating A New Water Supply Well

April 2011

When deciding where to locate a well, the well owner should ensure drinking water is protected from contaminants. Important factors to consider include:

- natural elements on the property (e.g. flow or location of groundwater)
- the location of existing buildings
- potential sources of contamination and safety hazards.

Ontario's Wells regulation (O. Reg. 903) sets minimum requirements for locating a new well. These rules along with other well construction requirements are part of a multi-barrier approach to protecting groundwater and drinking water.

Location Requirements

The person constructing a new water supply well must ensure the location:

- meets minimum separation distances from sources of contaminants
- is accessible at all times for cleaning, inspection and repair
- is at a higher elevation than the immediate surrounding area.

Sources of Contaminants

Assessing and determining the source of a contaminant is done on a case by case basis. For example, sources of contaminants could include a septic system or a fuel oil storage tank.

A well should be located away from all property lines because a well owner cannot control what happens on adjacent properties.

See the technical bulletin called Wells Regulation - Siting a New Water Supply Well for more information about potential sources of contaminants and minimum separation distances.

Complex Geology or On-site Contamination

It is recommended that a professional engineer or professional geoscientist be retained to locate the well when the geology poses difficulties or contamination may exist on the property.

Learn more

- Technical Bulletin: Wells Regulation – Siting a New Water Supply Well
- Water Supply Wells – Requirements and Best Management Practices
- Wells regulation
- Ontario Water Resources Act

Ontario

Contact us

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Notice: This fact sheet is being provided for information purposes only and is not intended, nor should it be construed as providing legal advice in any circumstances. The applicable legislation including the Ontario Water Resources Act and Regulation 903, as amended and made under that Act, should be consulted. Legislation and regulations change from time to time so it is essential that the most current versions be used.

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